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By:

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In 2019-20, Whitehills and Pinecrest elementary schools will be demolished and rebuilt, East Lansing Schools Superintendent Dori Leyko announced during Monday night's School Board meeting.

This will be the second round of new construction stemming from the passage of a school bond [2] election last year. Currently, the District plans to demolish Glencairn [3] Elementary school this summer, and then construct new Glencairn and Donley elementary schools over the next year.

Donley students, staff and faculty will remain in their current building while the new building is constructed on the same site, while Glencairn students, staff and faculty will move to Red Cedar Elementary for the school year. Both schools are expected to be complete in the fall of 2019.

It is not known yet where the populations of Whitehills and Pinecrest will be during the 2019-2020 school year because neither of their sites can support a new building without demolishing the current building. One group will move to Red Cedar and the other will go to the old Donley building.

This leaves Marble Elementary as the last elementary school to be reconstructed in the 2020-2021 school year. Marble students, staff and faculty will spend that year at Donley Elementary as the administration will also be undertaking phase two of renovations to Red Cedar Elementary at the same time.

By fall 2021, all six elementary schools will be reopened.

Pinecrest parents had been publicly asking the Board of Education and District administrators to reconstruct their school next, claiming it is the most overcrowded of the elementary schools and that is causing their students' test scores to suffer.

Also during the Monday's meeting, the Board:

- approved a new middle school elective course for 6th graders. STEAM Explorations ?opens the door to 6th grade students to learn about robotics, design technology and video game design that until now has only been available for 7th and 8th graders,? wrote Glenn Mitcham, Director of Curriculum.
- approved two bids for renovations for Red Cedar Elementary School totaling \$48,120 for commissioning and materials testing. Additionally, Leyko said they will be planning a groundbreaking ceremony at Red Cedar for the end of the month at Red Cedar.
- approved a joint statement [4] on gun violence and school safety with the East Lansing High School Parent Council Board, East Lansing District Parent Council, East Lansing Student Council and East Lansing Education Association. The statement is similar to the resolution [5] the Board approved last month, and opposes all guns in East Lansing Public Schools other than those carried by trained law enforcement. The statement also opposed state legislation that would allow concealed guns on school campuses and prohibit local jurisdictions and school boards from banning guns on campuses. The statement supports the restriction of sales of automatic and semi-automatic guns, enforcement of federal and state minimum age requirements for gun purchases, mandatory three-day waiting periods and universal background checks. The statement also supports gun safety locks, increased funding for mental health, alternative education programs and funding for research of the causes and effects of gun violence.

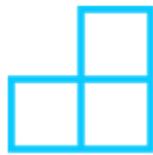
After the passage of the statement, Leyko told the Board that the District is currently pricing the installation of buzzers with audio and video between the front door and the main office at the elementary schools, and adding a buzzer system in the middle school. Leyko is meeting with the high school soon to discuss further security measures for that building, she said. Leyko hopes the upgrades will be installed over spring break.

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[2] <http://eastlansinginfo.org/content/school-board-votes-94-million-bond-proposal-forward>

[3] <http://eastlansinginfo.org/content/el-residents-get-first-look-plans-glencairn-elementary>

[4] <https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicItemDownload.aspx?ik=42104353>

[5] <http://eastlansinginfo.org/content/el-school-board-formal-resolution-no-guns-schools>

[6] <https://eastlansinginfo.org/boe>

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